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THE FLYING STAG PLAYS NO. 8

# THE PRODIGAL SON

HARRY  
KEMP



SMONT ARENS NEW YORK



THE FLYING STAG PLAYS  
*For The Little Theatre*

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No. 8

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THE PRODIGAL SON

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THE PUBLISHER.

The PRODIGAL SON  
A Comedy in One Act by  
Harry Kemp ▼ ▼ as played  
at the Little Thimble Theatre

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## THE PRODIGAL SON

was first produced by the Provincetown Players at the Playwrights' Theatre, New York, on March 10, 1917, with the following cast:

LEVI, the Prodigal Son	- - -	<i>Lucien Carey</i>
SIMEON, the Elder Brother	- - -	<i>Hutchins Collins</i>
REUBEN, the Father	- - -	<i>Don Corley</i>
MIRIAM, Simeon's Betrothed	- - -	<i>Ida Rauh</i>

The Play was also produced by the Harry Kemp Players at the Little Thimble Theatre, New York, on November 5, 1917, with the following cast:

LEVI	- - - - -	<i>Don O'Connor</i>
SIMEON	- - - - -	<i>Harry Kemp</i>
REUBEN	- - - - -	<i>Charles May</i>
MIRIAM	- - - - -	<i>Florence von Wien</i>
RACHEL	- - - - -	<i>Dorothy Irving</i>

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# THE PRODIGAL SON

TIME: Sometime before the beginning of the Christian Era.

PLACE: *A Hill Town in Galilee, near Capernaum. The scene is the upper or guest room in the dwelling house of the old homestead. A door in the back opens on a corridor. There is also a window that gives on a scene of distant hills, already rosy with the rays of the declining sun. On each side of windows is a curtain hung on rings. The room is furnished with a couch, a chair and a table. It grows dusk as the action proceeds. For a space the stage is vacant. Then enter SIMEON and REUBEN, in conversation.*

SIMEON

—so I can't help feeling a little bit hurt!

REUBEN

I don't see why, Simeon, my son. . . . He's your only brother . . . and he's been away—and in hard luck.

SIMEON

Yes . . . and while he's been off running about the world, having a good time, what have *I* been doing? *I* haven't been away . . . I've stuck right by you . . . I've worked side by side with the servants when help was short . . . I've repaired breaks in the fences . . . kept the men with plenty to do . . . seen that the crops were got in, watched over the flocks and herds . . . in fact, I've attended to everything. . . . Why, even to-day, the very day before my wedding, I've been off in the hills till sunrise, gathering in sheep for the shearing . . .

REUBEN

I know, my son . . . I don't know what I'd do without you . . . but I, too, work hard. Here, on the very day of my youngest son's return, I've had to go down to Capernaum to trade with a passing caravan . . .

SIMEON

Yes, we both work hard . . . [*with renewed energy*] but look at him! He digs all the shekels he can out of you—calls it his portion . . . and the first thing we know he's down at Jerusalem, making a scandal of himself—

REUBEN

Don't be too hard on him, Simeon.

SIMEON

He gets into disgrace everywhere he goes . . . Look at the things he did at Sidon, and at Alexandria . . . And now he has the impudence to come home, expecting you to take him back again.

REUBEN

He's young, and—

SIMEON

Young? . . . I'm only five years older than he is—suppose I ran off and let everything go to smash—the worthless dog!

REUBEN

[*Breaking in angrily and raising his cane.*] Don't you dare curse your brother!

SIMEON

And now you take him back . . . and you'll make a big fuss over him, and spoil him all over again.

REUBEN

What is it makes you carry on so? Surely you don't begrudge the feast I'm having tonight in honor of Levi's return?

SIMEON

[*After a brief wrestling with himself.*] Yes, if you want to know,—I do! I don't care if it *does* seem mean and small. When did you ever have a feast for *me*, I'd like to know? Why, even the wedding dinner that we are to have tomorrow night is at my own expense. And the feast you are giving in honor of Levi is coming so close on mine it'll spoil it entirely. Why, you've never in all your life thought of a feast for *me*!

REUBEN

But you never went away to foreign lands! You've always been here at home with me!

SIMEON

[*Striking his staff on the floor impatiently.*] There! That's just it! . . . You've always taken me too much for granted.

REUBEN

My boy, you break my heart, carrying on this way!

SIMEON

I've got to say what I think. I've kept it in too long . . . [*A pause.*] And the calf that I've been fattening—how about that? [*Angrily.*] One of the servants just told me—

REUBEN

[*Floundering.*] That calf? . . . why . . . why . . . I . . . I—that was killed this morning for tonight's feast.

SIMEON

And I was going to butcher it tomorrow for my wedding dinner! . . .

[*Enter, with jaunty self-possession, the Prodigal Son. For a moment he stands behind his father and brother's back, observing them. Then he speaks.*

LEVI

Hello, dad!

REUBEN

My son! My little boy! Levi.

SIMEON

Yes, that's Levi, all right.

LEVI

[Embraces his father, and speaks over the old man's shoulder.] Hello, Simeon.

SIMEON

Home again, eh?

[Levi carries a dapper walking stick on a wrist-strap, on his right arm. It is the last word in Roman fashion. It is in direct contrast with the long, crooked staffs the Elder Brother and Father hold.]

LEVI

[Slapping his father affectionately on the shoulder, his walking stick knocks on his father's back as he pats him.]

How are you, Pop?

REUBEN

My son! My little son! And so you are home again?

LEVI

[Heartily.] Doesn't it look like it? . . . I tell you what, it is good to see you again, Pop!

REUBEN

And you never forgot me?

LEVI

Of course not.

REUBEN

How big you've grown!

LEVI

I've been gone five years.

REUBEN

It seems like five lifetimes.

LEVI

It's been like that to me, too.

REUBEN

Ah, then, you've missed us—

LEVI

*[Not hearing his father . . . breaks in dreamily reminiscent.]* Seems as if I'd lived more than five lifetimes through . . . I've seen and been through such an awful lot! *[Sighing.]* I'm tired. It's a long trip from Cæsarea to Galilee. *[Seats himself.]*

REUBEN

*[With great concern.]* I'll have the servants prepare a nice warm bath for you . . . No, I'll see to it myself. And I'll lay out new white linen, and a purple robe.

*[Reuben goes out. Levi sits in sardonic silence. Simeon sulks.]*

LEVI

*[With sudden jocosity.]* Hello, Simeon! You haven't given me much of a welcome so far. *[Simeon remains silent.]* Aren't you glad to see me home again?

SIMEON

*[Breathing heavily.]* Ye-es!

LEVI

Well, then, you don't act like it, and you don't look like it.

SIMEON

Now, don't try to pick a quarrel with me the first thing, Levi.

LEVI

If we did we'd only begin where we left off the last time, wouldn't we?

SIMEON

Oh, I've put all that behind me long ago!

LEVI

Well, so have I, for that matter.

SIMEON

[*Mocking.*] You might as well . . . it wouldn't do you any good.

LEVI

I'm five years older now. I could take care of myself better.

SIMEON

And I'm still the best wrestler in Galilee.

LEVI

[*Taking up what has really been in the under-current of their thoughts.*]

I hear you and Miriam are going to get married, at last.

SIMEON

Where did you hear that? Didn't you just get here?

LEVI

No. I thought you and Dad knew. The camel-express made such good time that I've been home ever since noon. And you can just bet I've looked things over ever since I got here. In fact, I haven't even had time to sit down before this. I've seen everybody, from the slaves up. It was Miriam herself who told me—

SIMEON

[*Uneasily.*] Yes, she's to become my wife tomorrow, and you might as well know it.

LEVI

It doesn't mean anything to me any more. I got over all that long ago.

SIMEON

It's just as well . . . it wouldn't do you any good, even if you hadn't got over it.

LEVI

[*Impudently.*] If I still wanted her, I'd ask your permission last of all. But I wouldn't have her now, not if all the wealth of the Temple at Jerusalem were coming with her.

SIMEON

[*Angrily.*] You'd better hold your tongue. I won't have the woman who's going to be my wife talked about in such a way.

LEVI

I wasn't talking about her.

SIMEON

Then I'd like to know what you *were* doing!

LEVI

Listen, Simeon! There are more women in the world than one: that's the first thing my experience in the world taught me. And there are certainly other women besides the peasant girls that live here in the hills of Galilee . . . [*Dreaming.*] When I go away from here again!

SIMEON

[*Brightening and relaxing.*] When you go away from here again? . . . I thought—

LEVI

[*Scornfully.*] Yes, you thought I was going to stay, didn't you? In this sleepy old village? Well, I guess not! You're all so dead here you can hear your own bones creak. I'd die if I had to stay here more than a couple of weeks.

SIMEON

Why did you come back then?

LEVI

Away off there in Rome, I got sentimental about the old home. I actually thought that it might be the best thing, after all, to come back, marry a Galilean girl, and settle down. But now I see how hopeless everything here is . . . how much behind the times you all are. Rome gets a lot of knocks, Simeon, and it may have its faults, but, at least, it's *alive*. I tell you what, I'd rather be broke and on the bum in Rome than the richest sheep-owner in all Judea. Ah, Simeon, there are a thousand and one things you know nothing about—and they will take me away again.

SIMEON

[*Coming slyly over and sitting beside him.*] But you were telling me about the women!

LEVI

[*Mocking.*] Ah, yes—the women! The women in the world outside . . . you can't begin to imagine how many beautiful women there are out there. There are so many beautiful women in Greece that it makes you dizzy turning around to look at them. They all have such beautiful, straight noses! And the women of Egypt—they're beautiful, too. Though they do get old and fat too soon, I must admit. But a fellow's through with them long before that happens, of course. And Cyprus, ah. . . .

SIMEON

[*Eagerly.*] And Rome, Levi—how about Rome?

LEVI

[*Clasping his hands in ecstasy.*] The women of Rome! [*Looking off into space.*] Brother, the finest woman here is nothing but dust and ugliness compared to the least of them. They have little feet and little hands, and the whiteness of their bodies—there's nothing like it in the world!



And their faces are all snow and sunlight . . .  
like the snow you see on the top of Carmel, when  
the sun rises behind it. . . . Their cheeks are  
like snow colored with dawn.

SIMEON

And their eyes?

LEVI

Ah, their eyes!

SIMEON

What color are they?

LEVI

When you look into their eyes you forget what  
color they are. For there's something else there  
that our women haven't got . . . a spirit . . .  
a freedom . . . [*low and impressive*]. The  
women of Rome belong to themselves . . .  
they're just as free as the men.

SIMEON

You mean to tell me the men don't own the wo-  
men there? Traveling has turned your head, boy.

LEVI

If it has, I'm glad [*rising and pacing restlessly to  
and fro*]. I never could be contented here any  
more.

SIMEON

You never were.

LEVI

So I'll just stay a little while and see everybody,  
and then I'll start out again.

SIMEON

[*Hypocritically.*] Father will expect you to stay  
for good.

LEVI

I love father, all right . . . but I can't stay here.

SIMEON

[*Relieved.*] Levi, you're not such a bad sort, after all. Suppose we shake hands and be decent to each other.

LEVI

Oh, I'm willing to be friends again, if you are.  
[*They shake hands after the Roman fashion.*]

REUBEN

[*At first from without.*] Come, Levi, everything's ready for your bath. [*Entering, and overcome with joy at sight of the reconciliation.*] Simeon! Levi! . . . I'm the happiest man in all Judea today!

[*Going up to his sons, he puts an arm over the shoulder of each.*]

SIMEON

I never did believe in holding a grudge.

LEVI

Neither did I. I'm glad we made up.

REUBEN

[*To Levi. Placing a large bath-towel over the latter's arm.*] There, Levi . . . go and take a nice warm bath. It will freshen you up for to-night's feast.

[*Levi goes out.*]

REUBEN

[*To Simeon.*] And now I must hurry down and see how the preparations for the feast are getting on.

[*Reuben goes out. For a space, Simeon grouches about the room. Then, suddenly, Levi comes in again, bath-towel over arm, as before. He throws it disdainfully across the couch.*]

SIMEON

You've taken a mighty quick bath.

## LEVI

I'm out of the humor. I can't stand getting into an old wooden tub—as we used to—once a week . . . after those magnificent baths at Rome. You ought to see them, Simeon . . . great marble staircases leading down into a hundred pools . . . and each pool of a different temperature . . . and some of the waters have strange perfumes in them . . . and thousands of slaves wait on a fellow . . . and . . .

## SIMEON

[*Roughly.*] The baths of Rome! . . . I've got to wash the sheep. It's shearing time. [*Going.*]. But make yourself at home, Levi. In a few hours we'll feast together.

[*Simeon goes out. Levi seats himself on the couch. Enter cautiously Rachel.*]

## RACHEL

[*Seating herself at his side.*] Levi, I thought I'd come up and see you as soon as you were alone.

## LEVI

And here you are. So you're the little tomboy I knew when I left home? You certainly have grown. . . . But tell me, why have you come to my room? Aren't you afraid my brother will have you whipped for this?

## RACHEL

Don't worry. He won't catch me.

## LEVI

But what do you want?

## RACHEL

That's a nice question to ask! I want to set out for Rome with you when you go away, that's what I want.

LEVI

Well, a day in this place is about enough for me. I'm leaving again tomorrow.

RACHEL

No matter when you leave, you must take me with you—even if it's tonight.

LEVI

But how can I? I don't love you, and I don't want you in the way.

RACHEL

Oh, for that matter, I don't love you, either.

LEVI

[*His egotism hurt.*] No? Then why should I take you with me?

RACHEL

[*Intensely.*] Don't you think a woman can get tired of living in the same place with the same people all the time, just as well as a man? Don't you think a woman sometimes wants to go off and change her life till she's somebody else, too!

LEVI

[*Slowly turning half around and scrutinizing her.*] Who's put all this into your head?

RACHEL

You!

LEVI

[*Cautiously.*] And you're sure you don't love me?

RACHEL

It seems that living in Rome has made you conceited.

LEVI

H'm! . . . Rachel, suppose I did take you with me to Rome—what could you do there?

RACHEL

Oh, take me, Levi—and I'll promise you you won't have me on your hands . . . just take me with you, that's all I ask. Since you got here this noon I've been thinking and thinking of all the great cities you've talked about . . . and the life there . . . and the lights . . . and the dancing and play-acting and turning of night into day—and I want to get away from here!

LEVI

And I ask you again, what could you do for a living in Rome?

RACHEL

[*Enthusiastically.*] I want to become a great dancer!

LEVI

[*Bored.*] Yah! . . . That's what they all want to be. . . . In Rome, sooner or later, every mother springs a dancing daughter on her acquaintances. And the city is full of professional dancing-girls. They have Egyptian dancers . . . and Greek dancers . . . and Etruscan dancers . . . they even have dancing men and women from Hispania. . . . And so the craze has got here at last, too!

RACHEL

[*With impetuous eagerness.*] I know a lot of Phoenician dances. I could try them. I learned them from a Phoenician concubine of your father's. Arlaj was her name.

LEVI

[*Quickly.*] Where is she?

RACHEL

Your father got angry with her and sold her to the master of a passing caravan.

LEVI

[*Half musing.*] So I can't count on her, then. Phoenician dances! . . . [*Rising from the couch.*] Phoenician dances! . . . That is something new—something that Rome has never seen!

RACHEL

Well, what do you say?

LEVI

[*Kindling to the possibilities of the idea.*] What do I say? Rachel, I say that you've struck a big idea! [*Takes her by the arm.*]

RACHEL

What are you doing?

LEVI

Never mind . . . get up! Stand over there . . . now, pose! . . . Move about a little! You *are* graceful, and you've got a good figure, there's no denying that. . . . Rachel, I think I will take you to Rome with me; but how I'll manage it I don't quite see. . . . I haven't enough money to buy you from my brother, and I don't think he'd let you go . . . he's greedy that way.

RACHEL

[*Determined.*] I'll run away with you!

LEVI

But, as I've hinted, you happen to be my brother's concubine.

RACHEL

[*Intensely.*] He marries Miriam tomorrow!

LEVI

Well, what of it, he still owns you, doesn't he?

RACHEL

[*With spirit.*] He owns nothing. Like the women of Rome, I belong to no one but myself and the man I choose to give myself to.

[*Miriam knocks at the door without.*]

LEVI

[*Low.*] Here. Get under the couch.

RACHEL

[*Stubbornly.*] No. I won't. Not till you swear me an oath to take me to Rome!

LEVI

Siméon will almost kill you.

RACHEL

And you—will you go blameless? Will you swear?

LEVI

Very well—I swear. . . .

RACHEL

That you will surely take me to Rome with you?

LEVI

I swear by the altar at Jerusalem. [*As Rachel gets under couch.*] We'll steal two of my father's best camels . . . we'll go before dawn, this very night. . . .

RACHEL

[*Her head thrust out, morally shocked.*] What? You'll steal your father's camels?

LEVI

[*With non-moral seriousness.*] Why not? He won't pursue me. The laws are too severe on camel thieves. He loves me, you know . . . and my brother—he'll be glad to get rid of me so soon.

MIRIAM

[*Whispering without.*] Levi! Let me in. It's I!

LEVI

I? Who?

MIRIAM

Hush. Not so loud. Someone will hear. It's I, Miriam.

LEVI

[*Peevishly.*] Then go away! *Taking a scroll of Scripture, he begins to intone monotonously.*] In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth—Oi! Oi! Oi! . . . You are interrupting me at my devotions.

MIRIAM

[*Opening door stealthily and coming in.*] Levi, I have come to you at last.

LEVI

I see that plainly enough.

MIRIAM

[*Calmly.*] I have come to go away with you. We must go this very night . . . don't say no. The two best camels your father owns wait for us even now at the village caravansary. [*Lower.*] I stole them!

LEVI

The devil you say! [*He shows a pleasure over this information which Miriam interprets in her favour.*] But, Miriam, what do you mean by this? Don't you know that tomorrow you are to marry Simeon, my brother?

MIRIAM

[*Seating herself with an air of quiet and sure possession by his side.*] It is just that that I must now escape. Oh, Levi, since you've been telling me about the women of Rome! . . .

LEVI

I wish I'd kept my mouth shut.



MIRIAM

Levi, I'm glad you came back for me. . . . I somehow always felt you would.

LEVI

But, Miriam, I did not come back for you.

MIRIAM

You loved me once.

LEVI

That was long ago. And you didn't love me. And your people and my people had it all arranged between them that you were to marry Simeon—so that was the end of it! Then I went away . . . after I had a fight with my brother and got a good beating at his hands. [*He scrutinizes her closely.*] I always thought you loved *him*.

MIRIAM

I did. But now I feel that he has kept me waiting too long.

LEVI

That was to be expected. He couldn't afford marriage at that time, and so he took a concubine. But now that father has deeded him a two-thirds share in the property—

MIRIAM

To tell the truth, after you left I began to think more and more of you, and less and less of Simeon . . . and now I feel that Simeon and I are not really suited to each other.

LEVI

Where did you get that idea? It's not orthodox.

MIRIAM

I've been thinking a lot about what you told me of the women of Rome—

LEVI

Eh?

MIRIAM

Why should I marry this man, when I'm not sure I love him. No [*with determination*], I am going with you.

LEVI

But you belong to my brother already, by betrothal.

MIRIAM

Levi, like the Roman woman, I belong to no one but myself and the man to whom I choose to give myself. And I love you. I'm sure I do. We'll leave for Rome before dawn.

LEVI

You're not asking much!

MIRIAM

Tomorrow it will be too late forever. The wedding . . . oh, Levi, if I stayed here I'd go crazy. And I know I must love you, because ever since you've come back everything has grown suddenly different.

[*Ravenously she throws her arms around Levi's neck. In so doing she knocks over the candle and the room is filled with darkness.*]

LEVI

Stop, Miriam! . . . Don't! . . . I'm only a weak man!

[*A long silence.*]

LEVI

[*Resuming in a far-away voice.*] Go now! [*A sound of steps without.*] Go! . . . I hear someone coming. [*The door is tried for entrance.*] No . . . hide somewhere . . . it's too late. [*A vigorous knocking.*]

SIMEON

[*Pounding on door without.*] Levi, if you don't open this door, as sure as there's a God in heaven, I'll kill you.

MIRIAM

[*Terror-stricken.*] Hide me!

LEVI

Be quiet! [*To Simeon, in a loud voice.*] Go away!  
. . . This is a nice way to treat me on my first  
day home!

SIMEON

I tell you, Miriam is in there with you—I'll kill  
you both when I get in.

[*A fresh onslaught on the door.*]

LEVI

[*Hurriedly, to Miriam.*] Hide somewhere! . . .  
No, not under the couch . . . my—my trunk's  
there. Get behind the curtain, near the door. And  
be sure and slip out whenever I give you the first  
chance.

MIRIAM

[*Getting behind the curtain.*] Remember, the  
camels are ready.

LEVI

Shut up. Meet me behind the barn, just before  
dawn.

~~REUBEN~~*Simeon*

[*Battering on the door with redoubled fury.*] Mir-  
iam's here and I'm going to get her. If it isn't  
so, why is your light out?

[*Levi flings the door open and the brothers con-  
front each other—Levi smiling sarcastically,  
Simeon grim and stern. After glaring search-  
ingly into Levi's face for a moment, Simeon  
brushes him aside, comes forward and puts  
the candle which he carries on the table.*]

SIMEON

I heard a man and a woman's voices mixing as I was walking under the window . . . then I saw your light go out . . . the voice sounded like Miriam's. I'm quite sure it was hers. Besides, Jacob, the old slave, tells me she's been talking rather queerly lately about you, and—

LEVI

Don't make an ass of yourself . . . there's no one here. You only heard me at my prayers. . . .

SIMEON

[*Scornfully.*] You've got mighty religious all of a sudden.

[*As this goes on, Levi insensibly backs toward the curtain, behind which Miriam stands concealed. Noticing this, and seeing the curtain bulge, Simeon starts forward.*]

SIMEON

You don't act like a man who's alone.

[*Simeon makes a rush and grabs at the curtain over Levi's shoulder. Miriam screams. Simeon tries to pull her out, but Levi leaps at him, breaks his hold and pushes him back to the center of the stage.*]

SIMEON

[*Furious.*] Oh, the shamelessness of women!

LEVI

[*Standing tense and waiting for a fresh attack.*] It's only a slave girl—since you must know!

SIMEON

What slave girl?

LEVI

I won't tell you . . . and I'll keep you from finding out, too.

LEVI

[*As he grapples again with Simeon.*] You'll find me a different man now from what I was five years ago.

SIMEON

[*Laughing exultingly as he takes Levi about the waist and lifts him off his feet.*] And you'll find I'm still the strongest man in Galilee.

LEVI

[*Hooking Simeon's nose between the two first fingers of his left hand, pushing his head back and instantly striking Simeon across the windpipe with the stiffened edge of his right.*] And I've learned a trick or two from the wrestlers at Rome.

[*Simeon falls heavily to the floor and lies there groaning.*]

LEVI

[*Opening the door for Miriam.*] Get out, quick! I hear the Old Man coming!

REUBEN

[*Without.*] What's the matter?

[*Miriam rushes out. To save her face, escape being cut off by Reuben's approach, she turns abruptly in her tracks and begins to cry out, at the same time beating on the door.*]

MIRIAM

[*Without.*] Help! Help! They're killing my husband!

[*The door is flung open. Reuben appears, staff in hand, Miriam close behind.*]

REUBEN

[*Looking in a daze at Simeon, stretched on the floor by the couch, and Levi standing.*] Levi! Simeon! What has gone wrong?

## SIMEON

*[Recovering, though still groggy, begins to get to his feet. As he rises he glimpses Rachel under couch.]* Ha! Rachel . . . you!

*[With one hand he turns the couch completely over, uncovering the crouching concubine. With the other he seizes her and lifts her roughly to her feet, swinging her around to a kneeling position in the center of the group.]*

## MIRIAM

*[With a great burst of indignant surprise, which all but Levi and Rachel interpret as the indignation of virtue.]*

My future handmaid playing us such tricks! *[To Simeon.]* Have her flogged till her hide peels off! *[To Reuben.]* It was she, my father, that caused all this trouble!

## RACHEL

*[In a low, defiant tone.]* If I was mean enough I could say a few things!

*[Levi gives her a glance full of meaning and she subsides.]*

## REUBEN

Come, my sons, I must have an explanation!

## SIMEON

*[Pointing with disgust to Rachel.]* Can't you see for yourself!

## REUBEN

*[Looking severely at Rachel.]* So that's it, is it? . . . *[To Simeon.]* The caravan which lies at Capernaum over night leaves for Baalbec tomorrow. Take my advice, Simeon, and sell her off to the master of it. That's the way to deal with unfaithful concubines.

*[They start to go out, leaving Rachel and Levi alone. But Miriam drags back.]*

SIMEON

[*Irritably, to Miriam.*] What are you dragging behind for?

MIRIAM

[*With concealed jealousy, pointing to Rachel.*] Are you going to leave her here?

[*Levi makes signs to Miriam to keep still.*]

SIMEON

I have no further use for her. And I'll tend to her case tomorrow. [*To Reuben.*] There's no use raising a row, father. I'll take your advice.

[*Reuben, Miriam and Simeon go out.*]

RACHEL

[*Running up to the door, then rushing back to Levi.*] Now see what you've got me into!

LEVI

[*Astonished.*] What *I've* got you into?

RACHEL

Yes, what you've got me into!

LEVI

Say, rather, what I've got you *out* of! Cheer up, Rachel . . . we'll take those two camels—

RACHEL

[*Enthusiastically.*] The camels Miriam stole?

LEVI

Yes . . . and we won't even wait for the feast. My brother can warm over the fatted calf for his wedding dinner.

RACHEL

[*Ecstatically.*] And you're really going to take me to Rome with you?

LEVI

Yes, and what's more, when we get to Rome you shall be Ra-chell, the great Phoenician dancer!

RACHEL

And you?

LEVI

[*Mischievously.*] And I—why, I'll be your—manager!

CURTAIN



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